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**SF 2256** – Voter Registration, Automatic (LSB5106SV)

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Fiscal Note Version – New

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### **Description**

**Senate File 2256** relates to voter registration by providing for the registration of eligible electors upon review of electronic records received from driver's license and nonoperator's identification (ID) card applications. The bill takes effect January 1, 2017. The bill may include a state mandate as defined in Code section **25B.3**.

### **Background**

- Oregon enacted similar opt-out legislation that took effect January 1, 2016.
- Under current law, all Iowans are asked at the time of driver's license renewal if they want to register to vote. If they answer no, nothing further is done. If they answer yes, the voter information they provide is given to the counties. If the information is duplicate, nothing further happens. If the voter is a newly registered voter or a currently registered voter with an address update or party change, a new voter registration card is mailed out. (Iowa Code chapter **48A**)

### **Assumptions**

- The number of registered voters in Iowa is 2.1 million.
- Approximately 60,000 eligible customers per month are processed at the Department of Transportation (DOT) and approximately 14,000 (23.0%) opt to register to vote or report an address or party affiliation change.
- Under the bill, letters regarding automatic registration will be mailed to approximately 168,000 Iowans annually at an estimated cost of \$37,500 in FY 2017 and \$75,000 in FY 2018. If no action is taken, within 21 days, the person will be registered to vote. If the person wants to declare a party, a postcard can be mailed back. The postcard costs are estimated at \$29,000 for FY 2017 and \$59,000 for FY 2018.
- Every transaction from the DOT (approximately 60,000 per month) will be compared to the Secretary of State's database (IVOTERS system) to verify voter registration data and information.
- One-time costs incurred by the Secretary of State's Office include software and programming upgrades to the IVOTERS system. Arrikan, the IVOTERS system vendor, charges \$110 per hour for system upgrades.
- Ongoing costs incurred by the Secretary of State's Office include the administration of the opt-out program as well as assisting county auditors in the production, processing, and mailing of notices to eligible voters notifying them of their options to opt-out of registration or to select a political party affiliation.
- Any information technology programming costs for the DOT will be handled with existing staff.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The impact to the Secretary of State's Office is estimated to be an additional cost of \$750,000 in FY 2017 and \$200,000 in FY 2018 and each year thereafter. The increased mailing costs for the county auditors is estimated at \$66,500 for FY 2017 and \$134,000 for FY 2018 and each year thereafter.

**Sources**

Secretary of State (SOS)  
Department of Transportation (DOT)  
Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)

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/s/ Holly M. Lyons

March 7, 2016

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The fiscal note for this bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the LSA upon request.  
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